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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 000766

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR OES STETSON TINKHAM
STATE PASS TO AID/ANE TIM RESCH, PATRICIA CHAPLIN
STATE PASS TO NOAA/OIA JONATHAN JUSTI
BANGKOK FOR ECON JIM WALLER
BANGKOK FOR AID/RDMA TBEANS, WBOWMAN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [KSCA](#) [TBIO](#) [VM](#) [CVR](#)

SUBJECT: VIETNAM: SUPPORT FOR INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT

REF: HANOI 515

[1](#)1. Summary. The Department of State's East Asia Pacific Environmental Initiative (EAP-EI), USAID and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have supported the project Building Capacity for Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) in the Tonkin Gulf in Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam for several years. This project has been an example of strong bilateral partnership support between the United States and Vietnam. The project has also involved China. The first phase of this four-phase strategy began in 2002 and ends this spring. There is currently no funding for the second phase of the project, but given its success and the spin-off it engendered in Nha Trang (see details in para. 6 below), the Vietnam Mission strongly endorses providing additional funding to permit NOAA's continued engagement in Vietnam. End Summary.

[1](#)2. Since 2002, the Department of State's EAP-EI, USAID and NOAA have supported the project, "Building Capacity for Integrated Coastal Management in the Tonkin Gulf," in Quang Ninh Province, Vietnam. NOAA and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) are carrying out the project in partnership with Vietnam's Ministry of Fisheries (MOFI), the Hai Phong Institute of Oceanography, and the Ha Long Bay Management Authority of Quang Ninh Province. Various offices in NOAA, USAID's US-Asia Environmental Partnership (US-AEP), University of the City of Los Angeles (Reefcheck), and University of New Hampshire (Sea Grant) are providing technical support.

[1](#)3. The annual United States-Vietnam Bilateral Science & Technology Meeting has cited this project as an example of strong bilateral partnership support with both science-based and policy/management-driven outcomes. Specific project accomplishments to date include: baseline socio-economic assessments, habitat mapping of seagrasses and corals, ecotourism planning workshops, policy and institutional analysis, environmental awareness/public outreach materials, translation of ICM technical documents into Vietnamese and study exchanges to Charleston, the Florida Keys, Chesapeake Bay and NOAA headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland.

[1](#)4. The project activities were designed to share information among stakeholders from central government agencies, provincial planning departments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in Ha Long Bay World Heritage site as well as to build cooperation and programmatic linkages among resource managers and institutions in the United States, Vietnam, and China. For example, Chinese technical experts used U.S.-funded equipment to install mooring buoys in Vietnam. A study exchange of Vietnamese officials to China in June 2005 is another example of the project's regional linkages. During a recent meeting, representatives of the Chinese State Oceanic Administration formally welcomed closer cooperation and exchanges with Vietnam regarding management of the Gulf of Tonkin.

[1](#)5. The first phase of this four-phase strategy began in 2002 and ends this spring. There is currently no funding for the second phase of the project. In December 2003, Embassy Science Fellow Anne Walton (NOAA) developed a Strategic Plan for Integrated Coastal management in the Northern Tonkin Archipelago, which forms the basis for the next two phases of the project (reftel). Limited activities such as a GVN-funded study exchange to China's National Ocean Service will continue in the interim. NOAA intends to submit a proposal to STATE/OESI for Phase II project support.

[1](#)6. One result of the STATE/USAID/NOAA ICM project has been increased USG and NGO support for MOFI's mandate to develop and manage a national marine protected area system. This has led to a separate initiative for a pilot Marine Protected Area Training and Certification Program in Hon Mun MPA in Nha Trang. In partnership with MOFI, Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), USAID, IUCN, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy and United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), NOAA will have the lead for the pilot MPA training and certification

program at Hon Mun MPA in Nha Trang. The two-year project aims to develop local and regional capacity and expertise in designating, implementing and managing MPAs with a major emphasis on improving enforcement ability of Vietnam's newly established MPAs.

17. Comment: NOAA has effectively built partnerships, bridged traditional barriers and delivered tangible, highly valued products here in Vietnam in a relatively short period of time. NOAA's work with Vietnam and China has stimulated improved dialogue between these two countries on marine management and conservation in the Gulf of Tonkin. NOAA also is the technical coordinator for a UNDP/Global Environment Facility/NOAA initiative launched this year for marine biodiversity conservation in China's southern seas. Three of the sites for this initiative are in the greater Tonkin Gulf region of China (Shankou, Weizhou and Sanya). NOAA's simultaneous presence in Vietnam and China and its credibility with both countries could lead to a new regional management framework for the Gulf of Tonkin in the future. Such a framework could help assuage the offshore territorial concerns. The Vietnam Mission strongly endorses providing funds for NOAA's continued engagement in the coastal Tonkin Gulf region.

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